

**CAME OUT OF ROME.**

**Bishop John H. Vincent Recorded an Interesting Case From France.**

**The Convert Said It Was Not Bigotry to Tell the Truth About the Church, Its Priests and Nuns.**

Pauline's path was not a perfectly smooth one after that day in the open field with her father. And yet it was a happy one. Mother was surprised, and for a time very sad. But she was a woman of little force, no convictions, much amiability, and worshipped both her husband and her Pauline. The two boys, it soon appeared, sympathized with the protesting party in this French household. But the priest called again and again, and the Roman Catholic neighbors, set on by the priest, had a great deal to say. But Pauline had thought too much and read too many pages in her blessed Bible to be appalled by their warnings or silenced by their logic. Pauline had three words on her tongue's end, and she always gave them in the Christian Order: "Christ, Scripture, Church." He, the only mediator, was always first. She sought and found Him in His hold Word, and she prized the church only as it was His body and as it became "the pillar and the ground of the truth." This was a solid foundation to stand and to build upon, and when Romanists talked to her about the "church" she talked to them about the scriptures and the Lord. If they spoke of "saints" she spoke of Christ. If they talked about the "popes" she asked for the evidence of his office and appointment in the Word. And the Bible was too much for the Romanists. Perhaps this is the reason why its use by the people is so much discouraged by the priesthood.

Pauline's course made much talk in the village. Indeed, this young Joan of Arc was so brave, and bold, and so fair and lovely withal, that her tongue became a dangerous weapon among the young people of her neighborhood, whose faith in the church was not any too strong before Pauline had taken her decided stand. Something must be done to stop her mouth, lest she corrupt her companions and harm the church. But how to do this was no easy problem to solve. Once the ecclesiastical authorities had a very simple way of disposing of such an unruly member as a Protestant tongue. They could burn the body that owned it; or they could imprison; or they could behead; or they could torture by rack and wheel, thumbscrew, boot, dropping water, and boiling lead. There was a time when the Church of Rome did such things for God's glory, the salvation of souls, and the purification of the world. And the Roman Catholic church that did these things openly and in the full light of the sun, in Italy and France and Spain and elsewhere, would do them today if she dared. Why should an infallible church change? Why should one pope strike a medal to commemorate the brutal massacre of St. Bartholomew and send a congratulatory message to the chief perpetrators, and order a Te Deum in St. Peter's in celebration of this blow given to the enemies of the church—why, we ask, should one hope of an infallible and unchangeable church do all this, and another pope of the same church not do it? But this "perversion" of Pauline took place in France, the republic, in the eighth decade of the nineteenth century, and the church dares not do as she has done a thousand times in darker ages.

"Father" therefore called on Pauline to "reason" with her. He had denounced, and warned, and called her names, and now expected that by the proper authorities, in a public way, she must be "excommunicated." But what if the "simple child" could be won back to "mother church and her soul saved?" It was the priest's duty to do all that he could to rescue Pauline from her terrible doom. And he tried. He made several calls. He found her at every greeting the same attractive, genial, charming girl she had always been. But when they began to talk the mild girl became the brave woman, and although her voice was not raised unduly, nor her manner at all violent, the young maiden had a strong and positive way of putting things, which caused the "father" to wonder. He found her more than a match for him. She had an uncomfortable way of holding onto the Word, which, not strange to say, she seemed to understand better than the priest. "Where is your Scripture for it?" she would ask. And he fell back on the councils, and the fathers, and the papal decrees, and the voice of the church. "But where is your Scripture for it?" was Pauline's ever-ready question. "As for your confessional," she said, "it is a human institution, and has no good end to serve. It is without authority and works much evil. And where is your Scripture for it?"

"Do you not, my innocent, know that you are commanded in the Holy Scriptures and by St. James to 'confess your sins'?" asked the priest. "Ah, but quote it all, quote it all," cried Pauline: "Confess your sins to one another." And where in this command to make mutual confession do you find any ground for the accursed confessional? You well know, sir," and her face grew red and white by turns, and her voice trembled, "you know well what its possibilities of evil are." The priest was abashed by her bold manner and braver words. He did know well, as does every Roman priest, how full of danger is the confessional. Thank God that Pauline was forever rescued from the bondage which it involved!

"It is idolatry," said Pauline to Father —, "this bowing before pictures, and images, and burning candles and the high altar. It can be nothing else." "We do not worship them, we worship Him whom they represent," replied the priest. "No pagan could or would say less," answered Pauline. "The Chinaman who bows before his idol worships not the thing, but the invisible one. At least so the pagan priest will tell you. In the meantime the ignorant crowds actually worship the thing. And just so it is in your Romish church. Whatever you or the authorities of the church may say, the ignorant people, whom you have made and kept ignorant, worship pictures and images and the 'body' of the Lord at your elevation of the 'host.' And as for Mary and the saints, what can be worse idolatry than the popular idea among your people about her and the other creatures whom you supplicate? Where is your Scripture for it?" Vainly did the master of sophistries try to evade the straightforwardness of a girl with her eyes open, and her tongue, thanks to the age she lives in, free to speak the whole truth. "I saw," she continued, "an altar and an image in the Cathedral over at T— last week, and I read a strange and heathen inscription. There was a marble Mary, babe in arms. Around her were flowers, artificial flowers, and twenty-one candles burning (I wish the fire could have consumed the flowers!), and I read the offer of three hundred day's indulgence, once each day, for those 'who pray before this image.' Such things fill my soul with hold indignation. May the day come when the Lord shall tear down all idols and consume them with the fiery word of His truth!" Pauline's face shone like one inspired. And the priest left—Bishop John H. Vincent (Methodist), in Our Youth, April, 2, 1887.

Pauline, our little French Roman Catholic of whom a year ago we gave report, made rapid progress after her emancipation from Roman Catholic control, and became an intelligent, decided and earnest representative of the pure religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. She came more and more clearly to see what a mass of human constructions and of rubbish the Roman Catholic church is. She saw more and more clearly how through the centuries its superstitions had increased in power over the masses of the people; how children inherit the qualities of character which tend to promote and increase the power of this superstition; how, by betting a firm hold on the social customs of the people, the priesthood was able to dominate the nursery, the parlor and the school.

Having a friend who had given much attention to the discussion between Romanism and Christianity, she had access to some of the strong books on the subject, and was able to trace in the history of our civilization every movement of Rome against the liberties of the people; the consequent reaction in France, in Germany, in Italy, and everywhere else against priestly domination and the absurdities of the Romish faith. With her father the dear girl talked with utmost frankness, and they together grew in an appreciation of each other, in a love for the person, office and work of the true Christ, and in a loathing, intense because intelligent, of the mummeries, impositions and tyrannies of the old hierarchy.

While spending a few weeks at Mentone, on the Mediterranean Sea, in that lovely south of France region where all the charms of nature combine to give one a sense of restfulness and peace, Pauline met a bright little American girl who was just coming under the spell of the "sisters" and the priests during her European journey. "You think them all very lovely," said Pauline, after her little American friend had glorified the two pleasant nuns who had called on her, "but you don't know them." Nina, the American girl, replied: "Have you not too much bigotry, Pauline, in this country? In America we have no such narrowness of view; we are so thoroughly grounded in our Protestant faith that we do not fear the Roman Catholic priesthood." Pauline's eyes flashed as she replied: "You trust them because you do not know them. You trust your own strength and the strength of your institutions, but you

have not measured their power. What the Roman Catholic church has done in Europe it can do in America." "Ah," said Nina, "you know nothing about our system, which educates the people." "But I do know," said Pauline, "about your parochial schools, which the Roman Catholic church is establishing in America to prevent its own children from coming under the influence of the public schools. My father says that a republic is the easiest government in the world to bring under priestly control when once the priests get a good grip." "But how," said Nina, "where people vote and where everybody votes, can priests control a government?" "My father," said Pauline, "told me the other day about the balance of power. I never understood the expression until he explained it, and he showed me how a body of men bound together by an oath could cling together through thick and thin, and always vote on this side or that as they themselves or their leaders might determine. People not bound in this way will divide according to their different sentiments. Thus you will find Protestants voting on different sides in almost every political issue, while Roman Catholics at vote on one side, and while Protestants are calm, hopeful, and have perfect trust in what they call their free institutions, the Roman Catholic church is gradually building up one solid party, which can be hurled on one side or the other according to the money paid or the places of power offered. The more secure the people in America feel, the greater is their danger, because they will continue to think for themselves and vote for themselves, forming two, three, or more parties, the Roman Catholic tyranny the meanwhile always uniting to give the balance of power to the party that gives them the largest reward of power, civil and financial." "Well, I confess," said Nina, "that I cannot understand it, but the common feeling in America is that we have been too severe in our judgment against the Roman Catholic church, and many of our girls feel that the sisters are a very self-sacrificing and loving class, and that the priests have been very much abused." It would have done our young readers good to have seen the eyes of Pauline, the little French Christian, flash like lightning as she gave reply to her deluded American companion.

And this is the reply that Pauline made: "Never while you live, dear Nina, can you overstate the wickedness of the Roman Catholic church. You do well, of course, to acknowledge that there are good and devout Romanists. There are sincere and deceived people by the hundred thousand who really suppose that the Roman Catholic church is divine; that it was founded by Christ; that Peter was the apostolic head of it; that the Pope is the representative of Christ on the earth; that the power of forgiving sin is lodged in the hands of the priesthood; that this ecclesiastical power is also able to deliver from purgatory and to admit penitent and believing souls into the everlasting kingdom of God. These people give freely of their means to support the church. They get up early in the morning and walk through rain and snow and mud to attend mass. They pay their money to support the church; to bring their dead out of purgatory; to merit the favor of the priests, which is to win the favor of the Lord; and thus shut up in the terrible darkness of this terrible superstition, they turn over all their solicitude and anxiety, their fear and desire, with their money, into the hands of a self-seeking body of tyrants. There are also, my dear Nina, sincere Roman Catholic priests, who excuse themselves for the deceptions which they practice upon the unsuspecting people by such sophistry as this: If we keep them in ignorance we can keep them from a good deal of evil, and if we hold them in bondage we can control the political powers of the world in the interest of Christ and his cause. But, Nina, the Roman Catholic priesthood is as perfect a body of tyrants as ever ruled on this planet. Infidelity is better than Romanism. In some cases, stark atheism is better than Romanism. For Romanism has been the parent of infidelity, atheism, and anarchy. It has held whole nations in bondage, practicing its diabolical devices at the expense of the people, until aroused to a sense of the injustice, they have risen, as in Mexico, and denounced the church, and, as in Italy and France, become infidel and atheistic. Roman Catholic priests and sisters are very anxious that Protestants should look upon Romanism as better than no religion. Knowing Romanism through and through, I solemnly declare that no religion at all is better than Romanism. When people are pagans or skeptics you have the unimpaired truth with which you can approach them; but when people are Romanists they hold heresies which preclude the possibility of calm investigation of truth. And the apologies which you Americans make for Rome, priests grin over with fiendish delight, as they sit together in private planning against your republic and against the liberties of the ballot box and against

the rights of the people." Pauline spoke with such intensity that Nina approached her, and placing her little hand on Pauline's brow, pressed and rubbed it softly, as if she would allay the feverish excitement into which the girl had been thrown by her indignation. "Be calm," said Nina. "I am calm," replied Pauline, "but if you had seen all that I have seen of Romanism in France, of Romanism in our home, of Romanism in the confessional, of Romanism among the masses of the people, you would not wonder at the fire that burns within me when I see Americans and American girls so blind to the dangers which surround them."

The two girls then walked out through the beautiful gardens stretching along the sea under the blue hills which overhand Mentone and from the blue background of the wonderful Riviera.—Our Youth (Bishop John H. Vincent, editor), December 31, 1887.

**Romanism at Its Old Tricks.**

BRACELONA, Nov. 27.—Great interest is felt in the trial, now in progress here, of the two men, Callis and Enrique, accused by Ascheri, instigator of the bomb-throwing outrage during the procession of Corpus Christi in the spring of last year, of throwing bombs at a strike meeting in 1896, when several persons were killed and many others injured.

Callis was lately condemned to twenty years' imprisonment as an accomplice of Ascheri in the Corpus Christi procession outrage. During his trial on that charge he confessed himself guilty of the bomb-throwing of 1886. Brought now to trial on that confession he alleges that it was extorted from him by torture at Montjuich fortress, and his statement that he was subjected to torture is confirmed by the testimony of other con-

victs called as witnesses. Enrique, arranged with him on the charge of bomb-throwing in 1886, was acquitted today.

With regard to the assertion of Callis that he was tortured, Lieutenant Portas and others called for the production, deny that there is any truth in the story and the weight of evidence is against Callis. The public prosecutor demands a sentence of imprisonment for life in his case.

**SHALL WE HAVE THIS LAW?**

God placed in every Roman Catholic nun passions like those He placed in each of their mothers, and when we hear a Roman Catholic, or a milk and water Protestant, praising the virtue of the nuns we wonder if they have as much sense as God gave geese.

We do not believe nuns are all virtuous. Where you could find one who would dare submit to a physical examination by a competent committee of medical experts, you would find a thousand who had lost that priceless gem—their virtue—if one dares believe one-half he hears, sees or reads.

For that reason it is not about time that the American people began to regard priests and nuns as human; to realize that they have their good qualities and their faults; their love affairs and their disappointments; their joys and their sorrows, their calms and their passions; that they are faithful or treacherous?

Let us have a law compelling communities of unmarried women, who admit to their sleeping apartments none but unmarried men, to submit monthly to a physical examination by a board of expert physicians who shall report their findings to the chief magistrate under oath, and that in every case where evidence of moral delinquency can be established, the woman shall be fined for prostitution and the woman at the head of the community

shall be fined for conducting a house of ill fame, and the man who is a party to the iniquity shall be arrested and fined as in such cases made and provided.

Such a law might not have the effect we would wish, but it would make it impossible for any one to question the virtue of a Roman Catholic nun, which is often done today.

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